

FEDERAL PROGRAMS FOR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR HURRICANE EVACUEES

The Federal government is providing four forms of transitional housing assistance for Hurricane Katrina evacuees. Evacuees from the hardest-hit portions of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana generally fall into four distinct types of households: previous homeowners, renters, individuals who lived in public housing, and those who were homeless prior to the hurricane. Although there may be an overlap in program assistance, they were developed with the intention of not having anyone fall through the cracks. The combination of programs providing housing assistance is currently limited to a maximum of up to 18 months. The four programs that may provide assistance to an individual or household include:

1. Interim Housing for Evacuees, included in the Federal Emergency Declaration for California, category B under Public Assistance.
2. The Assistance to Individuals and Households Program (IHP), included in the Stafford Act under Individual Assistance.
3. The Katrina Disaster Housing Assistance Program (KDHP) under the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
4. Federally Subsidized Housing under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development.

FEMA-3248, PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA), CATEGORY B: INTERIM HOUSING FOR EVACUEES

The purpose of the Interim Housing for Evacuees Program was to expeditiously move evacuees from mass shelters, into more private accommodations such as rental properties or long term hotels/motels. This program was created to fill the gap caused by potential delays of 3 – 6 month in the IHP, which was anticipated as a result of difficulty in completing housing inspections. The program represents a relatively unusual application of the Public Assistance program, so program guidance has continued to evolve. Daily conference calls with FEMA Headquarters (HQ), FEMA Regions, and States were held until it became apparent that the same questions were being asked repeatedly with no policies being put in place. FEMA HQ decided to decrease the frequency of the calls so that policy information could be developed, standardized, and distributed for discussion on conference calls. The following is a summary of some of the policies that have been defined by FEMA for the PA Category B program:

- State and local governments are eligible applicants. However, PNPs can be reimbursed for eligible costs through a state or local government, providing there is an agreement in place and the eligible applicant can provide a written statement certifying that the PNP provided services on its behalf and the expenses are documented.
- Labor costs for full and part time regular employees are limited to overtime; eligible labor costs for extra hires include regular and overtime.
- Leases for interim housing must be between the PA applicant and the lessor in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

- Although originally leases of 6 to 12 months were suggested, current guidance is encouraging shorter term (1 to 3 month) leases.
- Housing assistance is limited to a maximum of up to 12 months.

The Disaster Specific Guidance and the most recent fact sheet prepared for this program are available on the OES website.

**FEMA DR-1603; DR-1604; DR-1605,
ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS PROGRAM (IHP)
INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE (IA):**

In the initial phase of this disaster, it was determined by FEMA that the Assistance to Individuals and Households Program (IHP) would potentially be delayed due to unsafe conditions for conducting housing inspection, which would therefore delay disbursement of funds an estimated 3-6 months. An initial award of \$2,000 Expedited Assistance (EA) was disbursed to those that registered with FEMA and were identified by zip codes in certain affected areas. This \$2,000 would be deducted from an individual or household's maximum IHP grant of \$26,200.

- To access this assistance the individual/household must register with FEMA (1-800-621-FEMA).
- The \$2,000 EA for Katrina has been discontinued as the IHP is now disbursing funds for Housing and Other Needs Assistance on an expedited basis under the regular program.
- Evacuees eligible for housing assistance through IHP will receive \$2,358 for three months of Rental Assistance, via electronic bank transfer or a check. This amount was determined by using HUD's "national fair market rate". These funds can be used for housing costs in any location the individual or household wishes.
- Funds are based on an expedited inspection process by identifying zip codes in areas most severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Satellite imaging and geo-spatial maps assist in determining water levels in order to identify homes with major damage or as destroyed (water levels of 12 inches or higher).
- Future reauthorizations of rental assistance will be based upon HUD "fair market rents" in the area where the evacuee is residing. (HUD fair market rents can be found at www.huduser.org under "Datasets".)
- If the \$2,358 for three months of Rental Assistance is insufficient for an evacuee to find affordable housing in an area, the evacuee should call the FEMA Helpline (1-800-621-3362) and explain the circumstances. FEMA may then adjust their assistance based on the Fair Market Rate for where they are currently residing.
- Housing assistance is limited to a maximum of up to 18 months.

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD), KATRINA
DISASTER HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (KDHP)**

In response to Hurricane Katrina, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established, the Katrina Disaster Housing Assistance Program (KDHP) via a FEMA Mission Assignment. This HUD-FEMA initiative was established in order to aid displaced Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama pre-disaster HUD-assisted and homeless families in finding temporary housing. This program is separate from, and should not be confused with, the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Since this special program is done under a FEMA Mission

Assignment, HUD will be reimbursed by FEMA. The following guidelines will be used to determine a family or individual's eligibility:

- Displaced pre-disaster public housing residents.
- Displaced pre-disaster Section 8 voucher program participants.
- Displaced families from other HUD assisted programs (e.g. 202, 811, Project-based Section 8, 236B).
- Pre-disaster homeless individuals residing in the disaster areas at the time of the hurricane.

Here is how a family would get KDHAP Assistance:

- Family obtains a FEMA ID number.
- Family makes housing location decision with assistance from HUD/local Public Housing Authority (PHA).
- Family obtains transportation from FEMA under the “Facilitated Relocation Program” that is being established under FEMA Recovery Division’s Individual Assistance Program. The “Facilitated Relocation Program” will be fully functional October 15, 2005 and will assist evacuees to: 1) re-unite family members placed in different shelter, 2) travel from a shelter to stay in a family member or friend’s home for at least 90 days, 3) travel to interim housing ready for occupancy, or 4) travel to their permanent home. This is not through the Public Assistance 403 program.
- Family arrives at new location and PHA coordinates temporary shelter and housing search assistance.

Other Information About KDHAP:

- Program was implemented October 1, 2005.
- There are no income eligibility requirements under KDAHAP.
- FEMA will work with HUD to ensure there is not a duplication of benefits between the KDHAP and FEMA Housing Program; this is why the evacuees must register with FEMA prior to registering with HUD.
- Leases will be executed between family and housing owner with a KDHAP lease addendum. Initial leases will be for 6 to 12 months with an option to renew; however, housing assistance cannot exceed 18 months.
- PHAs do NOT have to participate in this program. Therefore, if a family wants to move to an area where a PHA is participating, they may do so. FEMA may provide transportation under the “Facilitated Relocation Program” (see details above).
- Following the maximum amount of assistance of up to 18 months, families seeking permanent housing in HUD programs will need to meet all the requirements of that particular program.
- For Section 236 or 221(d) projects, California evacuees displaced from Hurricane Katrina are given priority over other applicants and are placed at the top of the waiting list for HUD Housing.
- For Section 202 and 811 projects, a displaced individual meeting all eligibility requirements (age, etc.) may be given preference over other applicants on the waiting list.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA), RURAL DEVELOPMENT SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

In response to Hurricane Katrina, the USDA, Rural Development is making rental assistance available for up to 6 months to Hurricane Katrina victims. (The National Office will reevaluate the situation after three months and additional Rental Assistance may be provided at that time). The application process has been streamlined to place hurricane victims in subsidized housing immediately. Rural Development is tracking vacant housing units throughout rural California that are available for rental assistance. For more information on available units, please contact Mirna Reyes-Bible directly at 530-792-5819. The following will be used in placing families:

- Applicants will be asked to obtain a FEMA Teleregistration number.
- FEMA will work with USDA Rural Development to ensure there is not a duplication of benefits between the Subsidized Housing and FEMA Housing Program.
- Families will be placed in available Rural Development multi-family housing units.
- Rental assistance is available to victims for up to six months; income verification is self-certified.
- Management companies are encouraged to waive the security deposits.
- Month-to month leases will to be utilized.
- Credit report requirements will be waived.
- If the project has a waiting list, dislocated persons will receive highest priority through the use of a Letter of Priority Entitlement (LOPE).